



Warrington Township
Environmental Advisory Council
Minutes of the Meeting
April 5, 2017

1. **Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance:** Fred Suffian, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:35 P.M. Present were, Ivy Ross, Vice Chairman; Todd Baratz, Secretary; Barbara Brown, Member; Nick Weremeychik, Member; Adele Weremeychik, Member; Kay Fairs, Bike and Hike Trails Committee Liaison; Lynn Laurelli, Member; Brianna Diegal, Member; Ann Kuter, Steve McCann, and Ken Jones, members of the public and John Rogers from Keystone Conservation.

Mr. Suffian led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. **Public Comment-** Those present introduced themselves and discussed some of their areas of interest. Mr. Jones explained that he is interested in learning what we do as an EAC. He is interested in starting an EAC in New Britain Township.
3. **Approval of Minutes -** On motion by Mr. Baratz and seconded by Mr. Weremeychik, the minutes of the March 3, 2017 meeting were approved. All were in favor.
4. **Business:**

- a. **Keystone Conservation-** Mr. Rodgers shared his background with the group. He explained that his company, Keystone Conservation, is taking a new approach to the importance of the environment by putting a dollar value on natural resources. With this approach, it makes it easier to prioritize resources by using their economic value. Some of these resources include, but are not limited to, stormwater, habitat, and wetlands.

Some of Keystone Conservation's methods of developing a strategy to educate their costumers include:

1. Placing a dollar value on implementing developed stewardship.
2. Training employees in ways to naturalize parks and open spaces.
3. Teaching residents how to implement backyard conservation.
4. Creating green spots within the local community.

Mr. Rodgers also explained the different courses he teaches as part of this program. These programs are for residents and employees of municipalities. He told the group that he would like to work with the WEAC to develop some of these strategies for Warrington Township. His fee would include some in-kind donation hours to develop a final plan, that he feels can be incorporated into Warrington Townships Open Space Plan. Ms. Ross asked Mr. Rodgers to put together a proposal that the WEAC could look at, including proposed activities and associated fees.

- b. Managing Natural Open Spaces-** Mr. Suffian explained that he and some of the WEAC members met with Mr. Knox from Public Works, and field viewed some sites. The group chose several sites to stop mowing this spring. These sites include the Valley Road Pump Station, the Palamino and Valley Road detention basin, the Guinea and Turkey Trot Lane open space and detention basin, the Billinsley Road naturalized detention basin, the Bristol and Red Oak Roads detention basin, and the Morning Walk naturalized detention basin. Ms. Laurelli volunteered to draft a letter that we can send to residents living adjacent to the proposed no mow areas describing the benefits of the no mow proposal.

The group also visited our previously naturalized detention basins to determine which ones we can stop mowing and which ones will need to be maintained on Community Service Day. The group decided to stop mowing most of our basins this year. However, we will continue to mow Hidden Court and maintain it throughout the growing season. We will hold a separate event in early May to weed, lay newspaper and remove cages and replace them with tree tubes, where appropriate. Ms. Ross will order 60 tree tubes for this event.

The Committee also decided to hold off on the tree and shrub-planting event at Barclay Pond and focus on the tree cluster-planting project at Lower Nike on Community Service Day.

- c. Lions Club Playground -** Ms. Ross explained that Toole Recreation Planners redesigned the proposed playground at the site of the closed Twin Oaks Day Camp, to incorporate public comment. The majority of the opposition was focused on the water park, the amphitheater and the concession stand. These features were all removed from the plan to satisfy the adjacent neighborhood.

At the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting held on March 23, 2017, the neighboring community was satisfied with the new design and the committee was able to make a motion to recommend the playground move to the Supervisor level for approval of a grant submission with a deadline of April 12, 2017. The BOS will vote on this at the next BOS meeting.

- c. Butterfly Garden-** Ms. Ross, Ms. Brown, and Ms. Laurelli worked with the Titus Elementary school students at the end of March to prepare the ground for the Butterfly Garden. We laid newspapers, coffee grounds and compost

over the area. We will be checking back in a few weeks to make sure the grass underneath is being eradicated.

- d. Earth Day at Valley Square** - Ms. Ross reported that the Valley Square Earth Day event will be held on Saturday April 22, 2017. The committee decided to have the theme for the event revolve around butterflies and pollinators. Ms. Ross worked with Ms. Welch, from Valley Square, to order some crafts for the kids. Ms. Welch was kind enough to order paper mache butterfly craft kits, butterfly bracelet kits and butterfly stickers from Oriental Traders. Ms. Kasins, from the Bike and Hike Committee, donated 550 Burpee Butterfly Seed mix packets for give aways.

Ms. Brown will bring her invasive plant display. Ms. Laurelli will work with the kids on the Enviroscape. We will also bring the rain barrel display, blue bird and screech owl boxes and bat houses to sell. We will collect phone numbers for those who would like to purchase rain barrels; however, we will not bring them to sell at the event.

Ms. Ross discussed the idea of a plant swap. Ms. Welsh, from Valley Square, had asked if the WEAC would be willing to have a swap at our event. Ms. Ross will talk to the Penn State Extension, and ask if any Master Gardeners would be available to help out that day.

- e. Tree Planting at Lower Nike- April 23, 2017-** The WEAC has been awarded a grant by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) for 17 large trees. If these trees were purchased from a nursey, they would cost between \$250.00 to \$300.00 each. We will be purchasing them for \$40.00 each. We will pay for these trees from the Township Tree Fund. Ms. Ross has already submitted a check request for \$680.00 from the Township. These trees will be planted in Lower Nike Park. The planting will begin at the bathrooms, along both sides of the trail, connecting to the cluster and tree planting project we had in the fall. Ms. Ross has coordinated with Public Works and arranged for a PA One Call, the Township to dig the holes on the Thursday and Friday before the event, ordered mulch and topsoil, arranged for watering and arranged for the pick-up of the trees on the Thursday before the planting event. Ms. Ross has also arranged for 25 volunteers for two separate time slots, 9AM to 12PM and 12PM to 3PM, from the Central Bucks South National Honor Society.

Ms. Ross will purchase snacks and water for the volunteers. Mr. Baratz made a motion that we spend up to \$100.00 for these items. Mr. Weremeychik seconded the motion. All were in favor.

- f. Community Service Day 2017-** May 20, 2017, with a rain date of May 21, 2017 is the official date for the WEAC Community Service Day event.

A few WEAC members met and viewed the existing naturalized detention basins and determined that most of these basins will not need to be maintained on Community Service Day. Several basins will no longer need to be weeded or mowed going forward. A separate event, prior to Community Service Day,

will be planed for Hidden Court. Many of the cages will be removed and tree tubes will be placed around the trees. The cages that are removed will be able to be used as part of the cluster planting project at Lower Nike on Community Service Day.

The cluster planting project at Lower Nike will be the WEAC's major focus project this year. Ms. Ross has placed an order with Octorara Native Plant Nursery for 114 trees and shrubs. She will arrange for a separate PA One Call for the entire area for the shrub planting.

Ms. Ross will work with Mr. Weremeychik to determine if we need to purchase any rain barrel parts.

There will be several items that we will need to purchase for Community Service Day. Mr. Baratz made a motion that we spend up to \$1,000.00. Ms. Weremeychik seconded the motion. All were in favor.

- g. Open Space Update-** Ms. Ross explained that there are currently no new updates.
- h. Future Agenda Items-** Mr. Suffian would like to invite Ms. Ann Toole, of Toole Recreation Planning, to our next meeting to discuss plans for the proposed Mill Creek trail.

- 5. Adjourn:** Mr. Baratz made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 pm. Ms. Weremeychik seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Respectively submitted,

Ivy Ross, Vice- Chairman, WEAC